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ABSTRACT

In its fourth year, Project Nuevos Horizontes served 315 limited-English-speaking, native Spanish-speaking students in fall 1988 and 300 in spring 1989. The majority of participants came from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The program's goal was to provide students with the academic and support services needed to ensure completion of graduation requirements and rapid transition (ESL), native language arts (NLA), and bilingual content area classes in science, mathematics, and social studies, and business education. Computer-assisted instruction, activities to reinforce pride in cultural heritage, and staff development and parental involvement activities were also provided. The project met its stated objectives in ESL, NLA, the content areas, attendance, cultural heritage, staff development, and parent involvement. The sole limitation of the project was that bilingual content area teachers did not conduct the courses bilingually, and more use of English would have served students better. A recommendation for program improvement was that teachers use English as well as Spanish in the content area courses. (MSE)

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# OREA Report

## EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

PROJECT NUEVOS HORIZONTES
Grant Number: G008525045

1988-89

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EVALUATION SECTION
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March 1990

# EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

PROJECT NUEVOS HORIZONTES
Grant Number: G008525045

1988-89

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PROJECT NUEVOS HORIZONTES
1988-89

SUMMARY


- During the 1988-89 school year, Project Nuevos Horizontes was fully implemented. It provided students of limited English proficiency with instruction in English as a Second Language, Native Language Arts, bilingual content area subjects, and business education. It also provided computer-assisted instruction. The project offered activities to reinforce students' pride in their cultural heritage, activities for staff development, and for parental involvement.

- The project met all its objectives: English as a Second Language, Native Language Arts, the content areas, attendance, cultural heritage, staff development, and parental involvement.

Project Nuevos Horizontes completed its fourth year, the first year of a two-year extension, under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.). Its goal was to provide high school students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) with the academic and support services necessary to ensure their completion of graduation requirements and a rapid transition into the mainstream. The majority of participants came from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The project functioned at James Monroe High School in the Bronx and served 315 Spanish-speaking LEP students in the fall of 1988 and 300 in the spring of 1989.

Project Nuevos Horizontes students took English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), bilingual content area classes, and business education. The program continued its computer-assisted instructional program and fostered pride in the students' ethnic heritage while developing their understanding of and appreciation for American culture and values. Project Nuevos Horizontes also provided staff development and parental involvement activities.

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) examined Language Assessment Battery (LAB) data to assess English language development; collected information from project and school records to evaluate attendance, N.L.A., and content area objectives; and used information from classroom observations and interviews of project and school staff.

Participating students made significant gains on the LAB; over 70 percent passed their N.L.A. classes; at least 65 percent passed their mathematics, science, and social studies courses. Project Nuevos Horizontes therefore met its instructional objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., and the content areas. It met its

attendance objective, since project student attendance rate was significantly higher than that of mainstream students. Since students participated in activities designed to develop a positive self-image and cultural pride in their heritage, the project met its cultural heritage objective. All staff members attended workshops, conferences, or college courses, allowing Project Nuevos Horizontes to achieve its objective for staff development. The project met its parental involvement objective, as the Bilingual Advisory Council held more than the proposed number of meetings.

Project Nuevos Horizontes was successful in achieving its goals and met all its program objectives. The sole limitation of the project was that teachers of bilingual content area courses did not conduct the courses bilingually; using more English would have benefitted the LEP students served by the project.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Teachers should use English as well as Spanish in the bilingual content area courses.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the 1988-89 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII program, Project Nuevos Horizontes. The project completed its fourth year of a five-year funding renewal and served 315 students in the fall and 300 students in the spring at James Monroe High School in the Bronx. Project Nuevos Horizontes provided students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) with bilingual content area courses while improving their English language skills. It offered a computer-assisted instructional program to reinforce skills, provided business education classes, and sought to foster pride for the students' ethnic heritage while developing an understanding of and appreciation for American culture and values. The project also offered staff development and parental involvement activities.

## HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

A history of Nuevos Horizontes can be found in the final report of 1986-87, and a full description of activities and outcomes can be found in the final evaluation reports of previous years of program operation.

## SETTING

James Monroe High School is located in the South Bronx. For over 15 years the school has provided bilingual services to a largely Hispanic population.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

In the fall 1988 semester, 308 of the 315 students participating in the program were from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. The remaining seven students were recent immigrants from India, Haiti, and Vietnam. All project students came from low income families and qualified for the federally funded free lunch program.

In 1988-89, Project Nuevos Horizontes served LEP students in grades nine through twelve (see Table 1). Fifty-one percent of the students were over-age for their grade.

The majority of students served by Project Nuevos Horizontes participated in the program for two years. The average number of years of education students had received in their native countries was eight, but a few students had only one or two years of primary schooling. Five percent were illiterate or semi-literate in their native language.

STAFF

As in the previous year, staff consisted of a project coordinator and a family assistant who were partially funded by Title VII, as well as a resource teacher and an educational assistant who were fully funded.

All Title VII staff spoke Spanish. The project coordinator and the resource specialist had master's degrees. The project coordinator had 15 years of experience, the resource specialist eight, the educational assistant two, and the family assistant 13.

TABLE 1

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade[a]

| Age | Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 2 | | | | 2 |
| 14 | 10 | 3 | | | 13 |
| 15 | 22 | 12 | 2 | | 36 |
| 16 | 14 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 33 |
| 17 | 10 | 19 | 11 | 11 | 51 |
| 18 | 5 | 13 | 22 | 16 | 56 |
| 19 | | 1 | 13 | 6 | 20 |
| 20 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 21 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 64 | 62 | 56 | 38 | 220[b] |

Over-Age Students

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number | 30 | 37 | 36 | 9 | 112 |
| Percent | 47 | 60 | 64 | 24 | 51 |

Note: Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

[a]As of June 1989.

[b]Data were missing for four students.

- Most students were were in the ninth through the eleventh grades.
- Fifty-one percent of the participating students were over age for their grade.

The project coordinator administered the program. The resource teacher supervised the bilingual resource laboratory with the help of an educational assistant. The family assistant monitored attendance and made home visits.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Project Nuevos Horizontes designed its services to speed students' transition to the mainstream. The program provided instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Spanish Native Language Arts (N.L.A.); and the bilingual content area subjects of mathematics, social studies, and science. The project provided computer-assisted instruction and access to the bilingual resource laboratory. Computers and the resource lab were two of the main foci of the project.

Project Nuevos Horizontes provided a number of support services, including academic, personal and college counseling, and job placement. The program contacted students' families by telephone and mail, and staff made home visits when necessary. The project also organized activities to increase parental involvement. Staff development activities included demonstration lessons, workshops, conferences, and university courses.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II reports the evaluation methodology; Chapter III describes the program activities and analyzes whether the project met its implementation objectives; Chapter IV gives an analysis of the

student outcome data; and Chapter V offers conclusions and a recommendation based upon the results of the evaluation.

## II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed two major areas: program implementation and outcomes. Evaluation questions include the following:

#### Process/Implementation

- Did the program select students for program participation according to specific criteria?
- Have instructional activities for developing English language proficiency been implemented?
- Have instructional activities for developing native language skills been implemented?
- Did staff take advantage of the activities provided?
- Did the project implement parent activities as proposed?

#### Outcome

- What was the average N.C.E. gain in English LAB scores?
- What percentage of program students passed their N.L.A. courses?
- What percentage of program students passed their courses in mathematics, science, and social studies?
- How did the attendance rate of program students compare with that of mainstream students?
- Did students participate in cultural celebrations and performances?

## EVALUATION PROCEDURES

### Sample

An OREA field consultant visited James Monroe High School. She observed two classes and interviewed the program director and the school principal. OREA provided a student data form for each student each semester; the project returned 224 completed forms.

### Instruments

OREA developed interview and observation schedules. The project director completed an OREA-developed questionnaire. Project personnel used OREA-developed data retrieval forms to report student demographic, attendance, and achievement data.

### Data Collection

Interviews of school and program staff and observation of classes occurred during May and June. OREA distributed student data forms to the program coordinator in January and April and collected them at the end of February and June.

### Data Analysis

OREA used the Language Assessment Battery to assess improvement in English proficiency. Project Nuevos Horizontes students were tested at grade level each spring. Students' raw scores were converted to Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) scores, which have multiple advantages over other scoring methods. They are standard, normalized, and form an equal interval scale. ("Standard" indicates that the unit of measurement is a fraction of the standard deviation of the original distribution of raw

scores; "normalized" refers to the fact that the scale is adjusted for the norm group so that its distribution has the shape of a normal distribution; and "equal interval scales" allow for legitimate aggregation or averaging of scores. Project students' N.C.E.s indicated their relative standing in relation to the national average of 50.

To assess the significance of students' achievement in English, OREA computed a correlated *t*-test on LAB N.C.E. scores. The *t*-test determined whether the difference between the pre- and posttest scores was significantly greater than would be expected by chance variation alone.

To ensure representative achievement data, OREA included only those students who had been in the program for at least five months and had attended classes for at least 100 school days. OREA extrapolated to estimate full-year scores of late-arriving and early-exiting students.

Limitations

Since all LEP students are entitled to receive bilingual and E.S.L. services, OREA was unable to select an equivalent control group.

## III. EVALUATION FINDINGS: IMPLEMENTATION

Project Nuevos Horizontes provided E.S.L.; N.L.A.; the content area courses of mathematics, sciences, and social studies; computer instruction; and mainstream business and vocational courses. The project encouraged students' cultural awareness and provided activities for staff development and parental involvement.

### STUDENT PLACEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

Scores obtained on the Language Assessment Battery* (LAB), as well as parental requests, guidance counselors interviews, results of teacher-made tests, and a review of academic records determined program eligibility and selection. As students reached the transitional level in E.S.L., they enrolled in one content-area course in English.

Once placed, most students remained in the program for two years. However, parents were informed of their option to remove their children from the bilingual program at any point and have them take E.S.L. and English-only content area courses.

Mainstreaming was a gradual process, with students increasing their enrollment in English content area classes as

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*The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of non-native speakers of English in order to determine whether their level of English proficiency is sufficient to enable them to participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

their performances on the LAB improved. Project Nuevos Horizontes followed the progress of mainstreamed program students and allowed them to continue participating in project-sponsored activities.

## INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project Nuevos Horizontes carried out instructional activities in E.S.L., N.L.A., and content area subjects.

### English as a Second Language

Project Nuevos Horizontes provided elementary, intermediate, advanced, and transitional levels of E.S.L. to program students in both the fall and the spring. The project provided a minimum of two periods of E.S.L. per day.

### Native Language Arts

Project Nuevos Horizontes offered program students 12 elementary, intermediate, and advanced Spanish courses for native speakers; including two special courses in Caribbean Studies and Spanish Literature. All N.L.A. courses had units on Hispanic culture, with the more advanced ones emphasizing literature.

An OREA field consultant observed an advanced N.L.A. class in Caribbean studies. The textbooks were in Spanish and were easily accessible to the students. During the class, the teacher asked different students to read parts of a short story aloud, then each student answered questions about the plot and motivation of the characters. Students completed sentences and discussed them.

Content Area Subjects

Project students were able to take 15 bilingual content area classes, including global and American history; economics; government; general science; biology; sequential, fundamental and business mathematics; occupational skills and business education; and keyboarding. However, teachers neglected the bilingual aspect of these courses as they did not use any English for instruction.

An OREA field consultant observed a fundamental mathematics class that was conducted entirely in Spanish. The students worked on algebraic problems, then checked answers with the teacher. The teacher explained mistakes to individual students and asked those students who had the correct answers to tell the class what procedures they had used. While the students seemed very involved in the lesson, the project coordinator suggested that students would be better off if more English were used in the classroom.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

The project posed non-instructional implementation objectives in staff development and parental involvement.

Staff Development

The program objective for staff development stated:

- One hundred percent of staff members will be fully trained in the educational aspects related to E.S.L., bilingual education, N.L.A., and computer education through attendance at workshops, conferences, or courses at institutions of higher education.

An E.S.L. staff development specialist visited James Monroe High School at least once a week. During these visits she observed classes, met with teachers to suggest improved teaching techniques, exhibited samples of new curriculum materials, gave demonstration lessons, addressed departmental conferences, and met with the assistant principal to discuss instruction. The assistant principal also observed teachers, held post-observation conferences with them, and organized staff development workshops and conferences.

Staff development activities consisted of demonstration lessons, workshops, and conferences held within and outside the school. Topics varied. Demonstration lessons consisted of E.S.L. instruction, computer-assisted instruction, and cultural enrichment activities. Workshops and conferences covered such topics as classroom management, attendance improvement, grading, foreign language and E.S.L. instruction, and multicultural education. The project also offered staff the opportunity to attend university courses covering a wide range of topics.

Attendance records received from the project coordinator indicated that all project staff and some non-project staff attended these staff development activities. Therefore, Nuevos Horizontes met its staff development objective.

Parental Involvement

The program objective for parental involvement was:

- The Bilingual Advisory Council will hold at least four meetings during the 1988-89 school year.

The project coordinator indicated that parental involvement was an important factor impacting the performance of project students. The project sponsored parent advisory council meetings and leadership institutes, parent-teacher conferences, the ninth grade "House Orientation," and a Christmas celebration. Parents appeared to be actively involved in the project. The parent advisory council met three times in the fall and twice in the spring, for a total of five meetings. Hence, Project Nuevos Horizontes met its parental involvement objective.

## IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS: OUTCOME

### INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project Nuevos Horizontes had outcome instructional objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., and the content areas.

### English as a Second Language

The evaluation objective for English language development stated that:

- As a result of participating in the program, E.S.L. students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency as measured by the Language Assessment Battery.

The project submitted complete pretest and posttest data for 181 students. (See Table 2.) Program students developed English language skills in every grade. Students achieved a mean N.C.E. gain of 5.5. Gains at all levels were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Project Nuevos Horizontes met its E.S.L objective.

### Native Language Arts

The evaluation objective for N.L.A. stated that:

- As a result of participating in the program, at least 70 percent of the students will score at or above 65 in native language arts classes.

Data were available for 193 students in the fall and 172 students in the spring. Eighty-nine percent of the students met the objective for the fall and 92 percent met it in the spring. Project Nuevos Horizontes met its N.L.A. objective.

TABLE 2

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences on
the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade

| Grade | Number of Students | Pretest | | Posttest | | Difference | | t |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean | S.D. | Mean | S.D. | Mean | S.D. | Value |
| 9 | 39 | 10.5 | 11.9 | 15.4 | 14.3 | 4.9 | 11.6 | 2.63* |
| 10 | 41 | 8.3 | 9.9 | 17.1 | 12.2 | 8.9 | 12.1 | 4.72* |
| 11 | 63 | 13.8 | 12.7 | 18.3 | 12.8 | 4.5 | 9.6 | 3.75* |
| 12 | 38 | 12.4 | 10.9 | 16.5 | 13.1 | 4.0 | 9.4 | 2.64* |
| TOTAL | 181 | 11.6 | 11.7 | 17.0 | 13.0 | 5.5 | 10.7 | 6.91* |

* $p<.05$

- Students in all grades made significant gains on the LAB in both semesters.
- Students in the tenth grade showed the largest gains.

Content Area Subjects

The evaluation objective for content area subjects stated that:

- At least 65 percent of the students will score at or above 65 in mathematics, science, and social studies.

Table 3 reports the percentages of students scoring above the passing rate of 65 in mathematics, science, and social studies. Overall and for all three subject areas more than 65 percent of the students attained the passing grade in their courses. Project Nuevos Horizontes met its content area subject objective.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Project Nuevos Horizontes proposed non-instructional outcome objectives in attendance and cultural heritage.

Attendance

The evaluation objective for attendance was:

- As a result of participating in the program, students' attendance will be significantly higher than the attendance of mainstream students.

Project Nuevos Horizontes implemented a number of strategies to improve the attendance of program students. The part-time family assistant contacted parents if a student was absent more than three days in a row, or if a teacher requested her to do so. The project provided support with counseling and tutoring services. It also instituted a system of rewards. Teachers singled out for recognition two students from each of the N.L.A., E.S.L., and bilingual classes who demonstrated regular attendance

TABLE 3

Passing Rates for Program Students
in Content Area Courses

| | Fall | | Spring | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing | Number of Students | Percent Passing |
| Mathematics | 139 | 73.4 | 109 | 64.2 | 248 | 69.4 |
| Science | 114 | 79.8 | 95 | 87.4 | 209 | 83.2 |
| Social Studies | 175 | 89.7 | 159 | 82.4 | 334 | 86.2 |
| TOTAL | 428 | 81.8 | 363 | 78.2 | 791 | 80.2 |

- Overall, at least 65 percent of students in mathematics, science, and social studies received passing grades.
- The mean passing rate for content area courses was over 80 percent.

and efforts to learn. These students received project Nuevos Horizontes t-shirts.

The attendance rate of the program participants was 89.88; the attendance rate for the mainstream students was 73.13. A $z$-test for the significance of a proportion was implemented to determine statistical significance. This procedure tests whether the difference between one group's rate (in this case, the program's) and a standard rate (in this case, the school's) is greater than can be expected by chance variation. The results indicated that the difference ($z = 5.65$) was statistically significant ($p < .05$). Thus, the project met its attendance objective.

Cultural Heritage

- Participating students will develop and maintain positive self-image and cultural pride by participating in cultural celebrations and student performances.

The project sponsored a variety of cultural activities throughout the school year. In the fall, participating students celebrated Puerto Rico Discovery Day with the Puerto Rican poet Tato Laviera and the theatrical group Repertorio Español. The students visited the Bronx Museum of the Arts and had the opportunity to see "Cafe con Leche" by the dramatist Gloria Gonzalez.

In February, participating students celebrated Dominican Independence Day with poetry readings, historical overviews, and cultural music. During the spring semester, the project continued the Big Apple program it started the previous spring.

This familiarized bilingual students with the cultural, recreational, and professional opportunities available in New York City and also encouraged proficiency in the English language.

The project sponsored a student newsletter that frequently reflected cultural themes. It included students' descriptions of and responses to project activities, announcements of future activities, parents' letters, and interviews with program staff members and other teachers.

Project Nuevos Horizontes offered many cultural celebrations and activities designed to foster pride in the students' own cultural heritage. Project Nuevos Horizontes met its cultural heritage objective.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In its fourth year of implementation, Title VII Project Nuevos Horizontes maintained its record of success in helping to meet the educational and cultural needs of bilingual students at James Monroe High School, enabling them to enter the mainstream more rapidly.

The project met its objective in E.S.L.: the mean N.C.E. gain achieved by students in every grade and in both semesters was statistically significant ($p < .05$), as was the overall gain. The project met its N.L.A. objective as it had in the previous year: over 70 percent of participating students passed their N.L.A. classes. At least 65 percent of project students passed their mathematics, science, and social studies courses. Project Nuevos Horizontes therefore met its objective for content areas. The project met its attendance objective since project student attendance rate was significantly higher than that of mainstream students.

The project continued the Big Apple program to enhance students appreciation for both native and American cultures and offered additional cultural activities. Since students participated in activities designed to develop a positive self-image and cultural pride in their heritage, unlike last year, the project met its cultural heritage objective.

All staff members attended workshops, conferences or college courses, allowing Project Nuevos Horizontes to achieve its objective for staff development. The project met its parental

involvement objective as the Bilingual Advisory Council held more than the proposed number of meetings. This contrasted with last year when Project Nuevos Horizontes failed to provide data for the parental involvement objective.

Project Nuevos Horizontes was successful in achieving its goals and met all its program objectives. The sole criticism of the project was that teachers of bilingual content area courses did not conduct the courses bilingually; using more English would have benefitted the LEP students served by the project.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Teachers should use English as well as Spanish in the bilingual content area courses.